**TRANSCRIPT—LOUISE WRIGHT**

**"AN ORAL HISTORY OF WEAVERVILLE"**

**Interviewee:** Louise Wright

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**Abstract:** Public lecture by Louise Wright on Weaverville history, covering early families in the area, economic developments, and building/infrastructure.

LW: --and share with us. It's wonderful to come to this library, not only for all of the books that line its walls, but also for the beautiful friendly staff that we have at the Weaverville Library. It's been an honor for me to be connected with the library.

(Applause)

I was with the first group that--we gathered up fifty books from volunteers all over the town of Weaverville, and we unloaded those little books into a little storeroom down off Florida Avenue, which is now used as a store room for the drugstore. Then, after being there for a little while, we moved into a storefront library, and all of the years since that time, what a joy and a wonder it has been to have this beautiful, loving library and to have Jill as our librarian. I want to tell you a little bit about Weaverville, the history of Weaverville. I've always been so very, very interested in history. And I think my father

before me, good old Georgia cracker than he was, was interested in history, so he drilled it into me: just be interested in everything that is going on and remember that we are living history every day of our lives. And I do appreciate you people coming this afternoon to hear the story. I hope I don't shock you but if I do, I won't mind a bit because we're delighted to have you with us.

I also want to tell you that there has been a history of Weaverville published in 1962. It is called *Dry Ridge: Some of Its History and Some of Its People*. It was written by Nell Pickens, who was the first librarian at this library, and she was our librarian for many years, and she collected all of this material and put it in this book, and it is a very, very interesting book. Also, I have another book and this is called *The Tribe of Jacob*. It was written by Pearl Weaver of Weaverville, and it tells you about the daily life in pioneer days, and there's some very revealing things in this book. It's a history of the Jacob Weaver family, but it's very revealing for everyday history of our community.

This *Dry Ridge* is just a beautiful, beautiful book. I also took the liberty of inviting two good historians to come this afternoon. I invited Blanche Robinson who has done such an interesting history on the pioneer homes in and around Weaverville, and also invited Josephine Osmond, who is our volunteer curator of the Dry Ridge Historical Museum to come. So, if I make any mistakes, Josephine and Blanche, you keep tabs on me so that I can have a correct history of Weaverville.

Now, then, let's turn back the leaves of time and think about years and years ago. The history of Weaverville dates back over a span of two centuries, moving from a beautiful virgin forest land in the 1980s known to the Indians as Dry Ridge. This was a neutral

hunting ground for Indians. The game--they had so many, so much game in our forest and such beautiful trees that the Indians agreed they would not fight over it. They'd come here, and have peace together, and there'd be enough game for everybody to go around. But today, we are a busy, well-populated urban center, and our property evaluation within the town of Weaverville reaches up into the millions of dollars.

I do want you to know that a number of our families in the Weaverville area were listed in the 1790 United States census. And it's good for us to know at that time that we had Weavers and Reagans and a good many other names. But it is--our history tells us that John Weaver was the first white man to come and settle in the Reems Creek Valley in 1787. Now in 1783, the legislature of the state of North Carolina passed a ruling that anyone who would come and make a homestead on land west of the Blue Ridge Mountains, that they could have this land, 100 acres--100 acres for fifty shillings. If my math is right, that's about 50 cents an acre, girls and boys.

But land in those days--I do not say positive that that was John Weaver's motive in coming, but I have a suspicion it played an important part, because here he came to establish his home in this area and from John Weaver with his family of ten children we have we have a good many beautiful, lovely, wonderful Weavers. John Weaver and his wife with that ten children. When John had been here probably ten or twelve years, he had accumulated a good many acres of land in addition to the one hundred acres he received as a special grant from the state. And he built the first log cabin that was ever built in the Reems Creek Valley.

I had a strange thing happen to me in telling that story one day to the second graders at the Weaverville School, and what justice I got for saying that he built the first log cabin. This little boy's hand. shot up, said, "Miss Wright, did you meet him?"

(Laughter)

I had to confess that I did not meet John Weaver, but I admire the man for his courage and for the beautiful kind of citizen that he was.

As the years passed, other families came in. John Weaver's ten children grew up and had families of their own. Then there came a time where there were another, many families settled in a little area, nestled in a little place at the foot of a mountain not far from the Reems Creek Road. And it was an area where only Indians had lived, and the Indians call that place Dry Ridge because of a scarcity of rain. So, Dry Ridge was the first name of the town that we call Weaverville today.

Many years later in 1850, the United States Postal Service established a post office here in this area, and it was Reems Creek, North Carolina. That was the title of the post office. It was located in the near vicinity of what is now Main Street at Hamburg Mountain Road. And that post office stayed there for a number of years as Reems Creek, North Carolina--as the Reems Creek, North Carolina Post Office--but the community grew in those days. Most couples had big families, and they reared those children to work and to try to learn to be good citizens. So, we will build through, as its families--as these families moved in and others came along with them.

And in 1873, the name of the town, it was suggested that the name of the town be changed to Weaverville. And the following year, in 1874 that the state of North Carolina chartered the town of Weaverville, naming it after the Reverend Montraville Weaver, who had given a great deal of land to a school. That was Weaver College, which operated in Weaverville for a number of years. Montraville Weaver gave the land on which the school was, and he gave part of the land for the town here. I've got Weavers listening to what I have to say. So, let me be careful, L.A.

(Laughter)

Some years after the town was chartered as Weaverville, a land auctioneer by the name of Charles Moore moved to this area, and he decided he wanted to have a poetic name for the village, and so he said he tried to pull the strings to change the name of the town to Elk Wood. He thought that was a very, very beautiful name. But you know, the residents of the town became perfectly indignant that anybody would get it changed, and so they made it absolutely necessary for us to go back to the name of Weaverville. And Weaverville resumed its rightful name, and has been that ever since.

The village was quite a center in the 1800s. I wasn't there but anyhow, they tell me it was a nice setup. The first house that was built in the town of Weaverville was a two-story house built by Montraville Weaver, and it was located where our civic parking lot is by the post office now. I've sat on that front porch a lot of times and watched the people go by. The businesses in that day, now listen: blacksmith shop, a tanyard, a tin shop, a harness and saddlery place, a wheelwright, and a livery stable, way back in the 1800s. I should have told you earlier, but in the nineteenth century, in the 1800s, there was an

ironworks on the bed of what is now Lake Louise. And people from all over this whole area of the county and beyond would come to this ironworks to have their tools made, so that Ironworks was--when they went out of business that while.

In 1874, the town was incorporated, had a town board for the first time. Doctor James Americus Reagan was named as the first mayor of the town. And the town board began to make all kind of improvements because they wanted to have a very up-to-their-day town, but they had to have some town limits. So, there was a feed and seed store which was located about on the place where that house-- that pink house on North Main Street, used to be the Erskine home-- there was that feed and seed store there. So, the town board said we will make this radius a half a mile north, southeast and west, and that'll be our town limits. So they kept that as the town limits of Weaverville for a number of years.

They made wooden sidewalks, and you know where they chose the sidewalks. It's two boards wide, and they just constructed that sidewalks from the lower part of what is now Brown Street over to the Salem Campground, because that had the most traffic on it, and people going to this Methodist campground on the side of the old Weaver College.

Now, listen to some of the laws that the town board passed. L.A. was on the board many years, so he appreciates some of these. The town board said there will be a fine if anybody goes down the street at a fast and furious speed, for the speed limit cannot exceed twelve miles per hour. (Laughter) There was, if there's any playing of ball on open streets, you would be fined. And each of the businesses had to have a hitching post ten feet wide so they'd have places to hitch the horses while they went in and do their business.

And the corporate valuation of the property within these town limits at that time was $44,000. The businesses--just think about it. One of them was Reems Creek Willow Mill. Farmers had sheep, in the spring, they'd flip the wool, take it to the mill, have it woven into jean cloth or else into blankets. Everybody would--they said they never could wear that jean cloth out. It was so it was so well-made. Other businesses, they had a corn and wheat milll down just off Lake Louise. There was also a general store in town, and they had a drugstore, which was located up on Main Street not far from the post office at that time.

Now, let me tell you a little bit about that campground. That plays such an important part not only in the history of the Methodist Church, but also in the history of the town. Over on this section of the campus which is a section just at the end of Brown Street over near where Weber College used to be, they established a place where people, all of the families of the area could come to a big revival meeting. The families would load up all the children in the wagon. They'd load up quilts, they'd load up food. They'd go over and spend as much as a week singing, praying, enjoying with each other, and having a good time. It started out as a small community, but it grew so big that about 1832, it was called the Salem Campground, and people would come from miles around there. And they decided that they would build a wooden house so they could entertain a whole conference, Methodist Conference at that time, which included sections of Tennessee, North Carolina, and a little bit of Kentucky. And hundreds of people came in to the campground. Bishop Francis Asbury spoke there, and the Weaver family would host, as to Bishop Asbury. Bobby was here.

That was a famous, famous place, and it was fun, and it was inspirational. For some reason, in going back through the history of the families, the people of that area had big families. They had ten children, eight ten, sometimes twelve children. So you see, it would give them a time to be together, and it was a very, very beautiful thing.

In 1836 when they built this wooden house, they decided that they would let other people use it. And an organization known as the Sons of Temperance was organized, and it played a part in the early history of Weaverville. There's records about the Sons of Temperance at the special library in Raleigh, North Carolina. Then Blackmer Masonic Lodge that was organized in 1855 also had its meetings in this wooden conference house. And in that house, this wooden building built on Salem Campground was one of the first public schools in within the whole county of Buncombe, and they would educate children from the first grade through college there. It eventually ended up when there came to be some one-room schools organized in various places in the village. It came to me that this place at the conference house was a high school later on. It became an academy later on. It developed into Weaver College, and as Weaver College for sixty-two years, it operated in the in the town of Weaverville. And it was a cultural and educational influence that gave Weaverville the name of being a good community all over the state. I think somebody has some pictures of that old conference house with them, and of the people there. It was when they built--you know, the conference house burned. I don't remember the exact year, but in its place, they made brick buildings, and the bricks were made from brick yards, or do I call it brick mills? Two of them. One was on the Gill Branch Road in Weaverville and the other one of the brick yards where the bricks were made was up on North Main Street. And the house where Randy Cox now lives into North Main, when

they took the bricks, when they finally raised the building and the bricks, the bricks were not all the same size. It was just interesting how they made such a wonderful building, and the bricks were not the same size.

Back to that old conference ground, old conference house that they had. There is no record, but during the Civil War, this house served as an emergency hospital when an epidemic of pneumonia broke out among the soldiers stationed in the Beaver Dam Valley. They were sent to this conference house to be to be taken care of until they were well, and it is rumored that there's unknown soldiers buried in the ground near where that old conference house was. We have a couple of Weaver College students today who are trying to trace the history for the state historic society to have that declared as a historic marker. Look, Chris Morton is one of the boys working on that.

Well, by 1875, there were thirty homes in town. So, the town decided that they would build a (  ) to take care of people who ran afoul of the law. They got a chief of police and they paid, his salary was $15 a month. For this salary he was supposed to spend all of his time on the job. I thought about that point, but would you believe me if I told you that in 1896, the total taxes collected by the town of Weaverville was $119.45 for the whole year. The year before that they tried to collect over $100 in taxes and didn't get but 97 dollars.

At the turn of the century, shortly after the 1900s, there is a period of time when the town of Weaverville was not chartered. There's no record of the town of Weaverville from 1904 to 1909. There's no record or file at all. Historians looking at the matter are prone to believe that the reason for it is this: the town board and the citizens of Weaverville

wanted a fine, paved macadam highway built all the way through town, which is our present Main Street. If they were an incorporated town, the town had to pay for the paving, but if they were unincorporated, the county had to pay for it. (Laughter) So, the road was paved, and I guess the county paid for it, but I've got a sneaking idea that they had some spots went on that town. (Laughter)

Electricity came to Weaverville in 1908 through the efforts of the town board and of John B. Erskine, who was a very active community leader in the town. And when I say electricity came to town, the electric line, the lines for electricity came in, and in the homes there was a single electric cord from the center of the ceiling hanging down with a bulb at the end, and the bulb had a thing that you would turn the light off and turn it on. That was electricity, but it was so much better than kerosene lamps, and having to clean lamps, that people were thrilled to death.

Then in 1912, the town board sold bonds for a water and sewer district. So they had a little bit of trouble about that, but they got that installed, and then came the telephone in 1911. Mr. Erskine was mainly responsible for the telephone, and he owned most of the phone company. You've never seen a telephone like it. Somebody made for me a miniature copy of the old wooden telephone so that I could be sure and not forget what it was like. It was on the wall, the telephone was fastened to the wall. On the left side was this crank, you turned the crank to make it ring, so to get the operator to give you the number. On this side is the receiver, and these are the bells that rang. The phones were connected on lines, and if my telephone rang, everybody on my line could pick up a receiver and listen to the conversation. So, that was one way that we had fun. But it was wonderful to have have a telephone. I used this type of telephone in the 1930s.

But later the phone company was sold to a larger corporation. I don't remember what it was, whether Western Carolina Company, and then to Contel of North Carolina. But anyhow, Mr. Erskine was the owner of the telephone company.

But we had a lot of businesses come along about then. Let me tell you about some of them. In addition to those that previously named, we had a taxi service, horse and buggy stall, and a livery stable, and it was down where our our ambulance has its service, that was located there. And then in 1914, we had the first volunteer fire department in the state of North Carolina. Our men organized it, and they were a model for a lot of other towns in North Carolina, to make a model of a volunteer fire department. And they operated it, and it was known to be so efficient, and I take my hat off to all of them, because they were really, really wonderful.

We had a very active organization of Oddfellows. They belong to the IOOF, and they had headquarters at Weaverville, and they took an active part in the community. So did Blackmer Masonic Lodge, which had been organized in 1855. And another thing for recreation, Weaverville used to have Chautauqua come to Weaverville once a year. There was a big--Chautauqua was in a big tent. It was located just about where Cole Vending Service is about Main Street. They would have a week of programs, and under this big tent, everybody would go and hear, whether it was speaking or whether it was music, or whether it was a play. But Chautauqua was something that you, we just didn't want to--they didn't want to miss at all, because everybody loved it so much.

I would not forget that when Weaverville also had a railroad, a real trolley car that provided hourly transportation for people and also freight delivery between Weaverville

and Asheville. And it operated for a number of years. In Dry Ridge, there's a picture of a whole group of maybe thirty or forty people in front of the depot there, that where the trolley car would come there. And every hour you could go to Asheville. I've heard a lot from the old timers, tell me about how good it was to ride that trolley car and all the good conversation that went on while they were riding from between Weaverville and Asheville.

Also, I want to tell you that at the time, the present  town hall, where the present town hall is,  there was a bank. There were two hotels in town. One was located just back up where Town Hall now is, and the other hotel was down on South Main Street on the opposite side of the street. A little bit off from the primary school. I'm from Georgia, and I cannot speak without using my hands (laughter) in the location.

The first filling station erected in the county outside of the city of Asheville was the present Gulf Station, which is located down the street from this library. There've been two additions put to it but in the years since that time, this Gulf Station has been in operation all of that time.

And the first resident of Weaverville to purchase an automobile, he bought a red Maxwell. And it had two gears: one forward, and one backward. And the brake was on the running board. That was magic for the town. But you remember that the town's speed law was just twelve miles an hour, so--but his Red Maxwell kept him busy. Also, the Farmers and Traders Bank of Marshall opened a branch bank in Weaverville at this time, and that bank was located where our present town hall is, but it was not as pretty as our present town hall is.

Then, a new business started starting up. I'm not going to call it a business, but a new custom started about then, which may have been the forerunner of the present motel system. So many of the older families had great big houses that they lived in, and so they began the custom of taking in summer visitors, vacationers in the house, and serving them meals with that. It supplemented the family income, brought many new people into the area and brought in many dollars. Guests would spend a whole week at a time enjoying all that good mountain food, and fried apples, and molasses and all those good things, and also hikes all over this region to take to see the beautiful scenery. But that is just beautiful.

Not long ago, the telephone rang in one of the leading homes of our town and this man said, "Are there any places where we can come and stay like we used to stay when we stayed at the Bob Weaver House on the Reems Creek Road, and spent a whole week or two weeks?" But no more. The automobile changed it, and motel. But this was really a--that went on for a number of a number of years. Some of the guests who came got to be permanent residents and some of them even married our mountain people and became good citizens of Weaverville.

Okay, about the 1920s. Listen, the first full time public school was built in Weaverville. Seems so strange to me to think that in 1922, the primary school was built on South Main Street on the site of the present new little building. Prior to that time, there had been small, one-room schools located in different sections. These one-room schools would teach grades one through high school, and there was a subscription school off that one-room school out at the end of Church Street. There was one at the intersection of Marcello Road and Alexander Road. There was one at Beech. But anyhow, this first full-

time school was our primary school in Weaverville, and it housed all grades from the first grade through high school in that one building. Justine's looking at me like that. She's not old enough to remember that, but I do, Justine, first grade through high school. But the student body increased so rapidly that in four years, the county had to build another school a little further down Main Street, a brick building, and that new school was the Weaverville High School. And Professor Francis A. Penland was the principal of the school. So that let the high school students be down there, and then left this other school for the grammar grades.

We had the first century of Weaverville, the first one hundred years of the town of Weaverville, it was entirely and strictly completely Methodist and the reason for that was the fact of the influence of the Old Salem Campground and all the Methodist Camp meetings that they had. But when the '20s came around, other Protestant people decided that Weaverville would be a good place for their home. So they said, let us see if we can establish churches in the town. The Presbyterians organized in 1922, and they had ten members. And Dr. H.B. Dendy and his brand new wife arrived on the scene. They built a little one-room brown structure on the site of the present Presbyterian Church, and for years after that, the Presbyterians referred to that first little building as the Tabernacle. Well, all thought about it lovingly, but it didn't take them but about six years to gather up enough funds to build a beautiful church of native stone. And they have grown remarkably into one of the most beautiful, beautiful churches in our town. Well, the Baptists couldn't be outdone, so they had met, a missionary circle in the Baptist Church, eight women, had met for a long while, and they had Bible study and missions and everything, and so they decided it's time to organize a Baptist Church. So, in 1920, the

Baptist Church organized the first group. They didn't have any place to meet except to go to the schoolhouse, and they met at the schoolhouse for a long while. Then six years after that, they had, they built a building on Main Street at the corner of Pine Street. And that building is this building that has since been remodeled into this beautiful library, but it was the Baptist Church for many years, and they outgrew it and built a big church.

Now, I'll tell you something that I may get thrown out on the street for this. One of our important citizens had a visitor in town on day. So, our citizen took him to show this man the Methodist Church, the Baptist Church, and the Presbyterian Church. And so the two men looked at it and the visitor said, “Well, the Methodists came to town and they built a good courthouse, and the Baptists came to town and they built a nice town hall, but then the Presbyterians came to town and they built a church.” (Laughter) So we did. And you know something, if you look at him, you can see why that man felt that way, why he felt that way about it. The new Baptist church was built with the beautiful A-line roof, and was built and dedicated in the latter part of the 19th, the 1970s.

I do want to tell you that there were a couple of other churches in Weaverville, that one of them is no longer in existence. For many years, there was a small wooden church called the Methodist Protestant Church on a lot just inside the primary school. That little church had a beautiful mission project because they sponsored the organization of sanitarium for tubercular patients, and that sanitarium was called Bethel Home. It was located at the foot of Hamburg Mountain and the Reverend Homer Casto was the person in charge of it, and he operated for many years. Some of you will remember that this part of, Western North Carolina was famous for people who had tuberculosis that lived in other places. They felt that to come to the higher altitude was very helpful in in helping

them get over it. But that Bethel Home was operated for many, many years. In 1940. The little Methodist Protestant Church was merged with the Methodist Episcopal Church just to be one. And I wouldn't forget the Little Mount Zion Baptist Church, which is located down in the area where our Black families live. And it has been one of the leading churches in the organization of Black churches in the county. They call it the Little Mount Zion Baptist Church.

All through the years, particularly the latter part of the 19th century and the very first part of the next century, one of the main places of recreation for all of the people of this entire area was the pavilion on Lake Louise. There used to be a pavilion out over the lake. It was on opposite side of the lake from this town, and it was big enough to have a dance, and they'd have a band there, and they'd have the biggest dances especially on Saturday night. All these Asheville people came and they just had the most fun dancing in the pavilion over the lake. And you hear many tales about how very much they love it.

Weaverville also had a band. And this band played and marched on every occasion. Mr. Will Parker was one of the musicians in the band, and some of his musical instruments are on the display down in Dry Ridge Museum, and so is a piece of music written for Weaverville, well, for the Weaverville Band.

The latter part of the 1920s brought so many other changes. Now, let me tell you what, I try to give my bird's-eye view of this town. We had three new schools--had two new schools. We had three good churches. We had about three blocks of business districts facing on Main Street. They had paved sidewalks and the businesses included a drugstore, three grocery stores, and a meat market. One of the grocery stores was called

the jot-'em-down store because at that time, you could go to the grocery store and have all your groceries charged and pay for it at the end of the month. And Mr. Kelsey Ray, Justine, used to say, let me jot that down. He said it so often that his grocery store was referred to as a jot-'em-down. We had a post office which was located on Florida Street in the back part of the building where Shope's Store still is. We had a Farmer's Federation. We had an excellent cafe where you could get a cup of coffee for a nickel and a slice of good pie for a dime. It was just so good. We had a barbershop, had an A&P store, and the telephone exchange was on the second floor above the cafe building.

I can remember going up there to pay my telephone bills, walking up those door steps. The telephone operator was always a popular person. I can also remember that whenever the fire siren sounded, you could run to your telephone and ask the operator where the fire was. Feel satisfied. But anyway, they were the good old days. And in 1925, the franchise for electricity was sold to Carolina Power and Light Company of Asheville, because they could provide better service and give us, we would have better electric service.

In 1934, the Methodist Conference decided that they were going to merge Weaver College with Brevard Institute and Rutherford College to be one strong Methodist college rather than three struggling colleges, and Weaver College left Weaverville. Residents of the town parted with them with a great deal of grief, because they felt like for 62 years, we had enjoyed having them so very, very much, and that Weaver College made Weaverville a cultural and educational center for people all over this region. And we still are known as a historical center. The new college was located at Brevard because

Brevard had the most modern buildings and the biggest campus, and for that reason they made it--let them have their college.

After the Weaver College left, the property was offered for sale, and the Blackmer Masonic Lodge purchased the old, the land of which the old Weaver College administration building was, and they made it into a large meeting place. And they occupied it for many years until the building was declared by the state to be unsafe, and they had to take it down and build a new structure. But during these years, the town had grown so much. They had to increase the limits and had to have more taxes. So, using that same feed store that's now Johnson Feed Store, they said, well, using the feed store the center, we'll go one mile north, one mile east, one mile west, and one mile south, and that will be our town limits. And it has remained that way until recent years. We've had some voluntary additions added to it. There were more streets paved during this time. More homes were built, and each of the churches had built educational buildings so that they could have a place that they might have things for their young people.

Just at this time, and Kathleen's going to remember this, at this time the idea of consolidation of the schools came up in Buncombe County. So they decided that they would have a consolidated high school, and they'd build it out just off the Monticello Road, and they would take the high school students from Weaverville, Red Oak, Barnesville, French Broad, and Flat Creek. All the high schools would go to the North Buncombe High School, and that was a boon for the schools that were left in the community, because they could rearrange the curriculum to fit the primary and grammar grade ages of the children. So, the population of the schools grew and grew and grew.

And still growing. And the bus system that served the children got to be a very complex and still is a complex system.

I do want to tell you a little bit about this beautiful, lovely library. In 1955, some book lovers got together and decided we want a library in Weaverville. So, we got donations from the residents. The first donations were about fifty books, and we moved in this little storeroom which is at the back of the drugstore. We had two bookshelves and we filled those with books. After we'd stayed in there for almost a couple of years, we moved to a storefront in the main business part of Weaverville. We formed a line of people who love the library, and we took these books from the shelves in the little bitty room, and we passed them from person to person to around the corner of drugstore, and into the new library. And Nell Pickens was our librarian at that time. And we stayed in that storefront library until we had money enough to buy the property for this building. And we had an architect rearrange it, and we moved into this, and it's a library that would be a pride and joy for a town of 15,000 people. It's so beautiful. We just love it.

Our telephone corporation was changed during these years, and the phone company built new brick buildings too, in our business blocks, and they were the first brick structures that had been built in town in many years. Also, a big corporation built a plant on the Reems Creek Road, and employed 250 people. They operated there for many years and then they moved. to Asheville. And at this time there, all the businesses in town included two hardware stores, a beauty shop, general merchandise store in the middle of the business park, and the post office was still at that time located back of Shope's Store.

Years later, the United States government built the new post office which is the current post office that we use on Main Street. There was a two-story structure down there on this side, the other side of the post office, and that was a building that had a hardware store in it. And there was a coal company next door. We had a shoe shop in Weaverville at that time and we had grocery stores galore, but it was still a village. It was a good, good place for our home. More people built homes here. It was just, it was just wonderful to see, and so many of the people were the children of the families that had been here.

Now, this I think is one of the highlights in Weaverville history. At this time, the federal government made a survey of homes in the United States, and in the state of North Carolina. Weaverville and one other town in the state was recognized as having the highest percentage of home-owned, owner-occupied dwellings of any town in the state of North Carolina. And I thought that was a certainly a tribute to Weaverville, because in that survey, 75% of the houses were occupied by homeowners in there. So I thought back through the years to our Chamber of Commerce, and that motto had been "Weaverville is a good place for your home." I was very proud of that. Weaverville got up in the headlines all over the state.

History is the story of people and what they do, and Weaverville has had more than its share of outstanding citizens. Through the years, there have been many accomplished musicians. I could name them but they were many beautiful ones. There've been local listed writers in the historical records of the state of North Carolina. They have been good doctors and excellent lawyers, fine teachers and excellent preachers who have left their footprints at the sands of time. There have been, there are today, cultural clubs and many-

-and recreational clubs, civic clubs, and many church activities. And each club has its loyal workers.

Weaverville offers every cultural advantage in modern schools, book clubs, civic groups, Girl Scout and Boy Scout troops, and all kinds of church activities. The motto chosen many years ago by the Chamber of Commerce, "Weaverville is a good place for your home," it is still a good place for your home. For anybody in Weaverville.

Listen. In 1975, the property evaluation of the incorporated town of Weaverville was 11 million dollars. The property evaluation was eleven, was 13 million dollars, and the population was about, within this village, was about 1100. In 1981, our present property evaluation is $70,286,600. And our population is 2,400 people.

Back then, there was a school in Asheville called the Asheville Normal where all teachers went to get their certificates renewed, and take advantage of courses there. Dr. Calfee was the president and Dr. Calfee said something that I have loved ever since. And this is what Dr. Calfee said about history: "History is the golden cord that links the centuries together. Upon its ample pages are emblazoned the immortal deeds of the noblest characters of the Earth."

History *is* the golden cord that binds the centuries together, and Weaverville *is* a good place for your home. Thank you.

(Applause)

Now, I want to tell you about somebody who has a beautiful project. Blanche Robinson and her husband are proposing a book of pictures and stories of pioneer homes in

Weaverville, and I recognize Blanche. Blanche, I can't find you. Well, if you will, tell us about yours and Jim's project.

Blanche Robinson: Your presentation was beautiful.

LW: Thank you, Blanche.

BR: Just beautiful. And Jim and I, my husband, we have been taking pictures of older houses in and around Weaverville area, and I have fallen behind in doing my write-ups on them recently, but we have two albums downstairs in the museum. Of course, the older houses are much remodeled and then some we have in our album are old houses that are no longer in existence. But I have been trying to write, and I need to write more on them of who lived in those houses, and who their wives and husbands were, and who their children were. So it's been a sort of a labor of love. And then recently, I have transcribed, let's see, since Weaverville was organized, there's only been three censuses that we can use. You see, we have to wait 75 years before they release to the public, because then you might know who, what age they were, and all that. So, I have done 1880 from a transcribed census. There wasn't any 1900. All those records burned when the Census Bureau burned in Washington. But I have transcribed 1900 just for Weaverville and 1910 for Weaverville, and I put them down in the museum. I've enjoyed this very, very much.

(Applause)

LW: Thank you. I would like for you people to see the books with the pictures of our pioneer homes, some of our families, the Weaver family, the Reagan family. When I first

came to Weaverville, I was told, "Now Mrs. Wright, there are 22 Mrs. Reagans in and around Weaverville." So I learned the 22 Mrs. Reagans. But those two books are on display in Dry Ridge Museum. I recognize--Jo must have left, but she would like very, we would like very, very much to have you visit Dry Ridge Museum, and see Blanche and Jim's book with pioneer homes, and also see some of the things. Particularly there, they have the broad axe that John Weaver brought with him when he first came in 1787. Look for that. And thank you so very, very much.

(Applause)

END OF LECTURE.